Elizabeth Lopez

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Dr. McInerney

Bilingual 4150-Foundations of Literacy in

Linguistically Different Classrooms

George, Jean Craighead. “*My Side of the Mountain,”*. New York: Scholastic Inc. 1959, 1988. 177 pages. Ages 11-13. Genre: **Survival Story**. Language: English

“*My side of the Mountain”* is a story about survival and determination. It waswritten by Jean Craighead George and it was illustrated by him as well. The book has a main character named Sam Gribely which plays the main character is tired of living in the crowdy city of New York and decides to run away to Catskill mountain in the middle of nowhere, there he finds ways to stay alive and comes up with new and inventive ways to catch food and build himself a shelter. With all of his determination Sam lives a happy life in the wilderness not only does he discover new ways to sustain himself but he also comes to find out about himself in the process.

I find this book to be interesting and inspiring to see such determination from someone. The main character takes up a huge responsibility by leaving all of his accommodations and family in order to begin his journey alone in the wilderness. The author who is also the illustrator makes you get the feeling as though you are also there with this young man in his journey. You are able to see his ups and downs throughout the story. It is noticeable in the story how the character is put to be a person with courage and a lot of determination to make his life in the wild the best he can have. It is interesting to know that there is people who prefer to live secluded and by themselves away from the city life. We are so used to depending on our technology and we so are accustomed to the “easy life” that we do not acknowledge the hard work that some people have to go through to even cook a meal.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Cisneros, Sandara. “*House on Mango Street,”*. Arte Publico Press 1st Ed. Vintage Contemporaries 2nd Ed, 1984, 1991. 110 pages. Ages 12-14. Genre: **Contemporary fiction**. Language: English

This story is about the life of Esperanza, a young girl living in Mango Street. This story’s setting is in Chicago and this story is about Esperanza’s experiences living in a “Chicano” neighborhood. Throughout the story Esperanza gets older and begins to develop both physically and mentally. Esperanza learns to overcome the challenges that she has experienced and feels ready to leave Mango Street behind.

“*House on Mango Street”* is one of my favorite stories. I like how the author, Sandra Cisneros, does her own portrayal of the Chicano family. Many readers can relate to the main character Esperanza. This story is of a young girl who is coming of age and it talks about her own experiences living with her family and her ups and downs she went through. Throughout the whole story we watch Esperanza grow into a young woman. I think that I personally find this story intriguing because I as well as Esperanza am Chicana and I relate to her in that sense. In comparison with other stories where one cannot really place oneself in that story because we can’t really relate to the main character.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Baker, Rachel. *“The First Woman Doctor”*. Simond & Schulster Inc. 1944. 188 pages. Ages 11-14. Genre: **Non-fiction**. Language: English

The book “T*he First Woman Doctor”* is about Elizabeth Blackwell who was determined to be a doctor back in 1840. During this time there were no women doctors in America, but this did not stop her from pursuing her career. The author portrays Blackwell as a strong-willed woman who did not let anything stop her from being a doctor.

Rachel Baker portrayal of Dr. Blackwell is of a person who she admires and praises. I agree with the author, I believe that Dr. Blackwell has opened many doors to a lot of women who since then persevered their dreams to become doctors as well. Elizabeth Blackwell should be an inspiration to all women, she has proved that nothing in life is impossible. Blackwell’s determination paid off and she broke all the boundaries that restricted women to be doctors.

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Lopez

Gormely, Beatrice. *“Fifth Grade Magic”.* E.P Dutton Inc. 1982. 128 pages. Ages 8-12. Genre: **Contemporary Fantasy.** Language: English

This book is about a girl named Gretchen Nichols who is in fifth grade. The story is about the adventures that her fairy godmother and Gretchen have. Errora, which is Gretchen’s fairy god mother appears to her one night while Gretchen sleeps. When times in school get tough Gretchen relies on her fairy godmother to bail her out of trouble and help her get the part she desperately wants in her school play.

*“Fifth Grade Magic”* kept me entertained. I found it to be a good book for young readers. I think many readers can relate to the character of Gretchen because we have all in some way felt as if our small problems seemed huge. We can go back and see it humorous to have thought that, but a fairy godmother would be any young child’s dream to have. This book sparks the imagination of any reader who reads this book. Personally, I think it would be great to have a fairy godmother to solve my problems.

Harvey, Jayne. *“Great-Uncle Dracula and the Dirty Rat”.*  Random House. 1993. 62 pages. Ages 8-11. Genre: **Contemporary realistic**. Language: English

This book talks about two siblings Emily Normal, and Elliot, who move to Transylvania with their uncle who is a vampire. The book is funny and entertaining to read. The book is not to long so it does not get boring. Throughout the chapters it has new adventures that Emily and Elliot have in their new school and the mischievous things that they put their Great Uncle Dracula through. Emily has a tough time adapting to her new school when on the other hand her brother Elliot adapts quite easily. They feel quite normal even though they have a vampire as an uncle.

This book is humorous and fun to read. Not many books portray a vampire as a nice and loving uncle and the author Jayne Harvey was able to portray the vampire as that. I think children might also enjoy reading it because it deals with the experience of having to move from another school and adapt to a new one. It is amusing to see the trouble that her brother and her get into. I think this book gives insight to young readers in how to deal with new surroundings. Even though it gives its insight in its own unique way. I was intrigued by the book and I think many young readers will agree and say this book is worth reading.